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RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA PRIORITY 2761
RHMFISS/CJTJF HOA PRIORITY
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SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/E, AF/EPS, AF/PD, EB, PRM/AF, IO
AID FOR A/AID, AA/DCHA, WGARVELINK, LROGERS, MHESS,
DCHA/OTI
DCHA/OFDA FOR GGOTTILIEB, PMORRIS, CGOTTSCALK,
KCHANNELL
DCHA/FFP FOR JDWORKEN, JDRUMMOND, TANDERSON, DNELSON
DCHA/PPM FOR SBRADLEY
AID/EGAT FOR AA/EGAT, JSCHAFER, JTURK
AFR/EA FOR JBORNS, SMCCLURE
ADDIS ABABA FOR TIM STUFFT
DJIBOUTI FOR JSCHULMAN
ROME FOR FODAG
GENEVA FOR NKYLOH
BRUSSELS FOR PLERNER
NSC FOR JMELINE, TSHORTLEY

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SUBJECT: HORN OF AFRICA, STATE - USAID HUMANITARIAN
UPDATE NUMBER 7

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This is the seventh and last bi-weekly update cable in response to Ref A request for bi-weekly reports on the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa. Subsequently, cables on humanitarian conditions in the region will be transmitted on a monthly basis. USAID Missions in Kenya and Ethiopia, REDSO (Somalia, Djibouti), and OFDA/ECARO contributed to this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

11. Water availability has improved due to the recent rainfall, but rains were below average to poor in some pastoralist districts. Livestock conditions are improving and prices of livestock have increased. However, full recovery will require several consecutive seasons of good rains. In addition, longer term drought problems, such as low water tables and reservoir levels, are still a major concern.

COUNTRY REPORTS

12. KENYA

UPDATE ON THE HUMANITARIAN FRONT: According to the USAID-funded Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET), most parts of the country received well-distributed and at times heavy rains from April to mid-

May. The rainy season is expected to extend beyond August in key maize producing areas, but projected to end in May in most pastoral areas. Pasture and water availability have improved in most pastoral areas except parts of Garissa, Wajir, Mandera, Marsabit, and Turkana districts where rains have been poor. Livestock body condition is improving in most of the districts, particularly among browsers such as goats and camels. Prices of goats have increased due to their improved body conditions. Cattle prices have also gone up mainly because some households have started restocking, but only a few cattle with good body condition are available for sale.

From May 22 to 24, a USAID/OFDA team comprising a Public Health Advisor and an Information Officer traveled to Garissa District, accompanied by International Medical Corps' Country Director, to follow up on reports of deteriorating health and nutrition status. The team met with district representatives from the Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) in Garissa town, and traveled to Bura, Modogashe, and Balabala divisions to assess conditions.

Officials report that eastern parts of the district received average to heavy showers while rains were below average in northern and western divisions. The team confirmed that conditions in the areas visited were dry with little pasture and few water sources. The Arid Lands Office reports that water tankering is continuing in Shimbirey, Abdi Gab, Ohi, and Alango.

Health status of the population is chronically poor and access to healthcare is limited. An MOH/UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) nutrition survey from October 2005 indicates 18.6 percent global acute malnutrition and 3.1 percent severe acute malnutrition in the district. Currently, the only facility to treat severe malnutrition is the provincial hospital in Garissa town. USAID/OFDA has funded UNICEF and CARE to support immunization, primary healthcare, nutrition, and water activities in Garissa District. Additional details of the team's findings are reported septel.

DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: More recent non-USG pledges include USD 3.7 million from the GOK, USD 2.0 million from Saudi Arabia, and EURO 500,000 (approximately USD 638,626) from Spain. At present, approximately 52 percent of the total EMOP requirement (USD 225 million) has been resourced.

WFP EMOP Pipeline: The cereals pipeline will break in July, WFP are utilizing some of their cash contributions for either local or international purchases. This will improve the pipeline if they arrive in country in time. WFP have received a significant GOK contribution of 7,700MT of CSB and they expect to start receiving 10,000 MT of CSB from the USG in early July. Pulses stocks are very low at present but will improve towards the end of July when pledges totaling 15,000 MT start to arrive in Mombasa from the USG and Canada. Vegetable Oil stocks are also low but WFP have pledges from the USG for 7,090 MT which are expected in mid July.

UPDATE ON THE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND OUTLOOK: FEWS NET reports that Maize prices began rising in April in all major markets across the country. The price increase ranged between 3 and 10 percent in key reference markets. This increase is consistent with the long-term average trends where prices rise from May through July, before the long rains harvest reaches the market.

Between March and April, seven nutritional surveys were

conducted by various organizations, including the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), Action Against Hunger/US, and Medecins Sans Frontieres/Belgium, which covered most drought-affected pastoral areas. The survey results indicated alarming levels of wasting and stunting rates (as high as 45.3 percent and 23.5 percent in Marsabit and Samburu respectively). Similarly, a five-year trend analysis of nutritional surveys point to a general deterioration of nutritional status in most of these drought-affected pastoralist areas. A combination of factors, including long periods of poor nutrition, lack of access to health services, and extreme poverty have contributed to this picture.

OTHER TOPICS OF SPECIAL INTEREST: The Kenya Red Cross Society and GOK health officials confirmed that an outbreak of dysentery in northeastern Kenya's Mandera

District has claimed the lives of 13 children in the past three weeks. The outbreak was caused by contamination of water sources in areas where carcasses were washed into water pans.

13. ETHIOPIA

UPDATE ON THE HUMANITARIAN FRONT: USAID/OFDA continues to respond to humanitarian needs resulting from the regional drought. On May 16, a geographic information systems (GIS) officer arrived in Addis Ababa. The GIS officer is helping to assess and strengthen information management and information sharing between USG field programs and Washington. The GIS officer is meeting with USG staff, UN agencies, and NGOs, and providing GIS and information management support for the regional response. In addition, the GIS officer is working with other USAID/OFDA staff to implement a new database tracking USAID/OFDA programs in Ethiopia. On May 21, two field monitors and a field officer departed on a nine-day monitoring trip in Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region (SNNPR). As of May 24, the team has traveled to several partner sites to monitor three USAID/OFDA programs.

As of May 22, USAID/OFDA has programmed more than USD 6.5 million, primarily through grants to seven partner non-governmental organization (NGO), UNICEF, and the U.N. World Food Program (WFP). In response to the drought, USAID/OFDA is currently reviewing proposals and plans to program at least an additional USD 1.8 million before the end of FY 2006.

The European Union has recently confirmed that USD 4 million, of the USD 10 million designated for the Horn of Africa, will be given to Ethiopia for the drought emergency. Denmark has also made a recent commitment of USD 700,000 to UNICEF for Health and Nutrition.

USAID's Pastoral Livelihood Initiative (PLI) partners continue to implement approved emergency response activities. Partners have vaccinated more than 1 million animals, and treated over 1.2 million livestock. More than 200 community animal health workers (CAHW) have been trained or utilized in these campaigns. Support to commercial off-take of animals, via revolving funds, will continue until the end of May 2006. Animal feed has been provided to maintain over 15,000 animals for breeding stock. Partners have repaired or rehabilitated 59 water points, 11 motorized and non-motorized deep boreholes, and 21 hand-dug wells in Somali Region.

DPPA/WFP PIPELINE AND DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: As of May 16, the Government of Ethiopia's (GOE) Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Agency (DPPA) has reported food allocations dispatched for Somali Region of 91 percent, 59 percent, and 0 percent for February, March, and April respectively. The reported dispatches for

Oromiya Region are slightly higher, at 98, 98, and 60 percent for February, March, and April respectively. Food dispatches and distributions continue to be

hampered in Somali Region due to rains and instability, the latter having escalated recently, which is impeding mobility in specific areas.

The DPPA/WFP cereal pipeline remains healthy into August, largely because DPPA is two months behind on distributions. The European Union has also announced a commitment for 80,000 MT of locally purchased food, which should take the pipeline through September and possibly into October. The belg (local term for short rainy season) assessment, due out in July, will provide a more detailed picture of food and non-food emergency needs for the remainder of 2006.

UPDATE ON FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND OUTLOOK: Rains continue to fall across Somali Region, providing much needed relief in the hardest hit areas. Unfortunately, rains have caused localized flooding, which has delayed food distributions in some areas. The overall forecast is still predicted to be below normal for the season, especially in the southern and eastern zones of the region.

Prices have increased to all time highs following the bombings in Addis Ababa on May 12. The price of teff, the most popular grain, has spiked by as much as 25 percent in the last two weeks, creating further pressures on urban populations and the poorest of the poor. Compounding the problem is the GOE's recent price increase for petroleum products by approximately 20 percent three weeks ago. The GOE has announced that further increases are planned gradually, in three month intervals, as the government is currently cash-strapped and can no longer afford subsidizing fuel. The additional increases will have a large effect on the transport sector, and subsequently on all other sectors reliant on transport. Trends indicate prices will continue to inflate until the fall harvest.

14. SOMALIA

UPDATE ON THE HUMANITARIAN FRONT: According to FEWS NET, March to May rains across southern Somalia have performed quite well this year, with normal to above normal levels observed since March 1. In some areas, rain started falling in February, resulting in a somewhat extended season. These rains have improved drought conditions, helped replenish water supplies, and rejuvenated pastures. However, the deficits from past failed seasons are still quite large, and longer-term drought problems, such as low water tables and reservoir levels, remain a concern. Rainfall levels have been lower in May, reducing flooding and increasing road access, especially for delivery of food and other humanitarian assistance. On May 30, the Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU) of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) will announce preliminary assessments of the current rainy season.

DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: The European Commission (EC) announced an aid package of Euro 70 million (USD 89,430,218) for the Somalia Recovery Program (SRP). According to an EC press release, the SRP will provide

immediate support to address Somalia's governance and security challenges, including consolidation of the Transitional Federal Institutions, and support to delivery of social services, particularly education and water and sanitation, as well as rural development and food security. The program includes Euro 18 Million (USD 22,996,652) for EC air operations into Somalia. This is particularly important as other organizations depend on the EC flights for transport in and out of Somalia to provide aid in the most remote regions of

the country. In addition, the European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid announced his visit to Somalia in mid-June, the first by a European Commissioner in 10 years. In the last two weeks, Somalia received donations of USD 4.8 million from the Netherlands, and USD 3 million from Saudi Arabia.

FOOD PIPELINE UPDATE: In the last two weeks, WFP has successfully delivered 18,100 MT without incident to Merca, El Maan, Kismayo, Bosasso, and Berbera. WFP had some space on one of their vessels and offered this to CARE who loaded an additional 1,400 MT to EL Maan. In early June, WFP plans three more vessels to transport an additional 18,500 MT. CARE is planning to send an additional consignment of 850 MT on May 26 to Merca.

Both WFP and CARE's pipelines are healthy for the next two months, but road access is a problem. The areas currently inaccessible by surface transport are parts of lower Juba, Gedo, and all of middle Juba. WFP is still looking for funding for their proposed air drop operation to these areas.

15. DJIBOUTI

UPDATE ON THE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND OUTLOOK: According to FEWS NET, overall food security is improving due to recent rains and consistent food aid deliveries to affected zones. There is, however, a need for coordinated provision of emergency interventions to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure proper targeting. Food and income derived from animals are not expected to improve significantly in the short-term, and full recovery will require several consecutive seasons of good rains.

The increased tension along the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea is creating a massive rural exodus to the Djiboutian side of the border of pastoralists escaping the military mobilization by both countries. This will increase the competition of already limited natural resources as the carrying capacity on the Djiboutian side is very low. Eldar and Manda markets in Ethiopia are already distorted and pastoralists in that area are having difficulty using these markets efficiently.

WFP's EMOP is facing a shortfall of approximately USD 2.8 million. However, WFP received multilateral donations from Luxembourg of USD 3 million; Ireland of USD 3.6 million; Canada of USD 5.2 million, and an estimated 1,240 MT of food aid from the USG, which is expected to arrive at the end of June. This contribution is part of USD 2 million announced by

Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Mike Hess, during his visit to Djibouti in April.

CONCLUSION

16. The rains in the last few months have stabilized the situation in the region to a certain extent and conditions are not as dire as compared to the beginning of the year. Based on this, REDSO/FFP and USAID/Kenya will now transmit the bi-weekly humanitarian reporting cable on a monthly basis. BELLAMY